

AGRICULTURAL JOBS, OPPORTUNITY, BENEFITS, AND SECURITY ACT (AgJOBS) **"Secure Borders, Economic Opportunity and Immigration Reform Act of 2007"**

"Much of the nation's economy today depends on the hard work and the many contributions of immigrants. The agricultural industry would grind to a halt without immigrant farm workers. Yet, the overwhelming majority of these workers today are not legal immigrants. The AgJobs provisions in this bill reflect a far-reaching agreement between the United Farm Workers and the agricultural industry to remedy one of the most difficult immigration challenges our nation faces. It provides a fair and reasonable means for illegal agricultural workers to earn legal status."

Highlights of the Earned Legalization Program for Ag Workers:

Requires that undocumented agricultural workers apply for a "Z-A visa" if they can demonstrate that they have worked in American agriculture for at least 150 work days within the previous 2 years before 12/31/06.

Requires that "Z-A visa" holders demonstrate that they have worked in American agriculture for an additional 150 work days per year for 3 years, or 100 work days per year for 5 years to get a green card. They can receive the card eight years after enactment when the backlog of current green card applicants is cleared.

No more than 1.5 million blue cards may be issued over the 5-year period and the program will sunset after 5 years.

Individuals may participate in employment other than agriculture so long as the worker satisfies the 100 or 150 workdays each year, and if they don't they will lose their status.

Workers participating in the program will be required to pay a fine, and show that they are current on their taxes, and learn English.

To avoid backlogs, agricultural workers who receive a green card under this program will be exempt from the overall numerical limitations on visas.